

The Gazebo Festered (beneath the skin)

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by Anonymous

Summary

It was a hunter, spurred by a festering hunger deep within. And the human before it, that quailed its song and quivered so pathetically, would be its food.

Or, Tommy is trying desperately to be a monster, but Wilbur is so very bad at being prey.

Notes

For context this is an AU of my fic I Asked for a Monster, except this time Tommy is the monster and Wilbur's the human. Technically don't have to read the main fic to understand this one, but it's recommended.

Also I was supposed to post this all at once as a oneshot on halloween but ran out of time, rip. You're getting it in pieces instead.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

The boughs of the trees were stiff and weighted, dripping with new rain. The creaking of brittle wood was familiar, so was the stale water that splattered against the monster's shoulders and soaked the mud it sloughed through. Maybe it had always been attracted to the sound, for it found the groaning of old boards to be quite alluring.

Before it was a human structure, it knew, although it couldn't quite remember what it was called. Something circular, slightly raised from the flooded ground, with little steps up to it and posts that shuddered beneath a sagging roof. It seemed to be composed entirely of windows without glass. A strange design. The monster liked it.

It dragged itself up, onto the splintered floorboards, shedding mud and algae with it. Here the wind quieted just a bit, and the ceiling groaned curiously, and the air was maybe just a bit warmer.

Ah, it could see how something might dwell here.

Not too claustrophobic, not too exposed. It decided that it would enjoy this imitation of a house. It was, after all, an imitation itself. A thing that pretended to be human, before one could see its shambling, twisting movements, look upon its sloughing face, and feel the rot curdle beneath their skin.

Yeah, Tommy liked this facsimile of shelter quite a lot.

This forest, this hunting ground, was new for it. But its last one was suffering an unsavoury infestation of humans with hunting things stalking the trees. So it moved on, and it moved here, and now it was content to breathe out muted rot that seeped into the ground beneath.

The mud was wet from rainfall, and it was easy to coax it to congeal more, to soften and breathe until pits of air formed beneath, and like waiting mouths the swamped ground rested around the festering structure.

Tommy nodded to itself, feeling more at ease with the rot around it, although admittedly the chances of anything wandering into its jaws was slim. It'd have to go and hunt, which it was never quite good at, but that's what practice was for. That, and it didn't really have a choice, that debilitating emptiness inside it growing to claw at its chest, urging it to consume something.

So, that night, content with its lair and rejuvenated by the recent rainfall, it drew itself away from the alluring music of the wooden beams, and into the depths of the trees to where the prey dwelled.

The town lights were bright. Little beacons in the night. Dazzling and undeniably a lure.

There would always be something in Tommy, tugging it back to its liar, but it didn't need that here. Not when humans made themselves so loud, so easy to shamble to, like a moth to the flame.

It wasn't even close to the town yet, still tucked into the treeline and starting to pick out the looming shapes of darkened houses, when it caught the sharp movements and rustles and low murmured babbling. The sweet, cloying smell of something living.

Tommy shuddered and slipped closer to the ground. Its skin crackled, oozing something congealed and black, veins twisting up its bloated flesh alongside the roots. Its eyes were pinpricks, focused and intent, sunken into its form and petrifyingly human. The simple, shining gaze of a child, attached to something contorted into a poor imitation of one.

It was soundless, the drawing of its limbs over the damp and clumped leaves no different than the soft breathes of the night. Its movements slow and sinuous as it stalked closer, that babbling like a sweet siren's call.

The human was so clumsy, stumbling about its gestures. It was perched openly on an old stump, a black case beside it, reading something aloud from the notebook in its hand. "-to kill my cat! No, nope, bad take. Why'd you have to- Okay, a little less voice cracking this time. Oh why'd you have to kill my cat? Why'd I have to take you back-"

Tommy turned its head slightly, faintly confused in the usual way whenever it encountered humans in the forest. They were always there for weird reasons. It didn't matter though. A human in a house going missing would raise alarm and get hunters prowling again. However, a human in the woods going missing would hopefully not be too out of the ordinary. The prey before it was as good as consumed.

Tommy felt its throat start clicking, its body twisting with a low creaking of joints, the leaf litter around it blackening and rotting, spreading out from its fingers that curled into the dirt. Its eyes were wide, luminous beneath the moon, as it drew forward to the edges of the trees, intent on the human that had yet to look up from its book and-

-A sharp, resounding ringing caused Tommy to flinch back as its clicking abruptly died away.

The human startled, then reached into its pocket to pull out a phone, the alarm of it too-loud in the stale air. Tommy hissed, low and tepid, irritation sharp as it slouched back into the shadows, curling close and moving soundlessly once more while the human answered the call in a loud, unbothered voice. "Hello? What, no, I said the Doritos were in the shelf above the fridge. Well did you maybe check the other shelf-"

Stupid.

As satisfying as it would be to rip the thing apart now and leave the one on the other side of the line with nothing but screams, that would unfortunately bring the hunters down on Tommy's head again, and it had just gotten settled here. If it was going to hunt, it'd have to be quiet and unobtrusive, at least until it had its fill of this place.

Annoyed, it watched the human get up and pack up its things, slinging the black case over its shoulder as it started shambling in the direction of the houses, still chatting away on its phone. Then, when it was gone, the monster turned and stood back up, to look for something else to eat.

It was only later, curled over the corpse of a deer, that it remembered.

A gazebo. That's what its home was called.

End Notes

Wilbur: what if you phoned me to ask where the doritos were but then i got murdered while you were still on the line and then it turned out we were all out of doritos. how fucked up would that be

Techno: what

Happy Halloween :)

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